1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

Roasted, I found them more palatable; crisp outside, and inside something like tender spinach. In neither case did they taste at all like meat. They are clean animals and as food not at all unpleasant, but one soon gets very tired of them, when one has to eat nothing else day after day.

All round the camp and all day long smoke screens were kept going, into which women and children drove the locusts. Next morning mountains of these insects lay drying in the sun, and when we left this camp site a few days later, there was not an empty sack or saddle-bag, and our camels carried gigantic loads of the dried insects. Men and women, dogs and camels, fed on them —but only for a few days; after that, they turned one's stomach. But what was left was carefully preserved for other and leaner times, for when the locusts swarm in vast numbers, one can safely predict drought and famine.

As we followed in the wake of these marauders, we found the land stripped bare; every bit of herbage had disappeared under their greedy maws. But I came to realize that the "plague of locusts" is not so utterly devastating in the desert as it is to the tillers of the soil in Transjordania, Palestine, and Egypt. In the desert it is a great blessing for all creatures. Buzzards, ravens, bustards and other desert game-birds fattened on the locusts, and flocks of storks trailed after the red clouds. Even to the human desert-dwellers they may be most useful. Faris told me that tens of thousands of Bedouins had to subsist for weeks on locusts alone, and that at times their camels and horses too can have no other fodder. During four-days' march northward—forty-five

l: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

136 to fifty miles from our last camp by the Jabal Tawil—
●731 we found all the pasture gone, consumed to the last blade by the locusts. It was only in the plain of Biyaz that we found a depression which was untouched and with plenty of forage. There we made camp under the shelter of a *wadi.*

342 The women and slaves unloaded the camels and at once proceeded to put up the tents. The tent-cloth is spread on the ground, looking like a long, black, hairy hide; the lines are drawn east and west, tent-pegs driven home with wooden mallets, and the long tent-poles, properly spaced, are inserted under the roof-strip. Then, by dint of lifting and pushing, up goes the structure; first one pole in place, then the next, and so on until the whole goat-hair "house" rests securely on its supports. Row after row of tents rose, casting long shadows as the last sun-rays gleamed on their peaked roofs.

264 I bought a weakly camel from my fellow-travellers, had it slaughtered and the meat distributed to all and sundry. The flesh-pots of Ishmael were soon steaming and the savour of them attracted a horde of hungry dogs. One of the tribesmen was to play host to myself, Faris, and a number of others. Out of the dark his troop of camels stole up silently, showing suddenly in the light of the fire as if they had come from nowhere, and lay down before his tent. It was comfortable and homely there by the fire, in the wide circle of men and beasts.

272 Our cook had transferred a turbid, muddy mess of old coffee grounds and water from a goatskin bag to a pot with a long spout, which he put on the hearth. Now the black, bitter brew foamed up again, and after it had

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[For a discussion of the problems arising on the annual trek of the Rwala when their usual grazing lands are desiccated see complete text, category 116, pp. 83-138.]

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

805 the first days of October. "Canopus has shown himself; well,
132 then, let us go into the inner desert; *ṭala'at as-shejl nušarreẓ*," is now the cry of the Bedouins, who, leaving the borders of the settled and cultivated districts, wander with all their possessions into the interior of the desert in search of pastures. Canopus reigns for forty nights, after which the Pleiades, *ṭrajja*, take the helm for twenty-five nights, *ṭrûwi*, to be followed by Gemini, *ǧawza'*, for an equal period. Thus the reign of Canopus, the Pleiades, and Gemini lasts ninety days in all — three months — and this season of the year is called *aṣ-ṣferi*, corresponding approximately to October, November, and December. Next, the star Sirius, *aš-ša'era*, rules for forty nights; this season of the year is called *aš-štai*. For fifty nights after Sirius the ruler is Arcturus, *as-smâk*, but in the middle of our April the reign of the stars ends, as then the summer, *aṣ-ṣejf*, appears, which lasts to about the beginning of June and is succeeded by the dry season, *al-ḳêẓ*, extending over four months, to about the first days of October. The Bedouin knows, therefore, five seasons of the year: *aṣ-ṣferi*, ninety nights (from the beginning of October to the beginning of January); *aš-šta'* forty nights (to about February 20), followed by a period sometimes called the second part of *aš-šta'*, ending about March 4; *as-smâk*, fifty nights (to the middle of April); *aṣ-ṣejf*, to the beginning of June, and the four months of *al-ḳêẓ*. The common Bedouin is quite ignorant of any other division of the year.

821 The rains are divided by the Bedouin into *al-wasm*, *aš-*
132 *šitwi*, *as-smâk*, and *aṣ-ṣejfi*. The first includes the rains of *as-shejlâwi*, *aṭ-ṭrûwi*, and *al-ǧôzâwi*, i. e. the rains of Canopus, the Pleiades, and Gemini, or the *aṣ-ṣferi* or autumnal rains.
[221] As soon as Canopus appears, the Bedouins leave their camps, pitched in the valleys and the broad dried-up river beds, which are often over two hundred kilometers long. After copious
● [731] rains have fallen at the heads of these valleys, the water rushes wildly through the channels, washing away the camps and drowning both the people and their herds; hence the
[245] proverb: "When Canopus rises, trust not the creek and gather dates even at night; *ilja ṭala'at as-shejl lâ tâmen as-sejl wa-tlammes at-tamr bel-lejl*," because at that period the dates are ripe and no selecting is needed. The *shejlâwi* rain is also called
132 *al-ḫerfi* (or *al-herfi*). If the ground is thoroughly soaked with
137 it, *arṣ mawsûma 'alejha-l-ḫerfi*, there soon appear on all sides

The chaff, *kišr*, which floats on the top is then thrown away, while the clean seed are spread on blankets and allowed to dry. Or the Bedouins lay the filled sacks when still moist in the sun, shake them until the seed fall to the bottom, throw away the chaff, and clean the seed once more, so that they may serve as an article of food in a poor season. This is called *semḥne* or *sebîb*.

The fertility, or abundance, *rabî'*, depends entirely on a luxuriant growth of the grasses, or annuals, not on that of the woody plants, or perennials. The latter become green even after a good *ṣejfi* rain, when the earth is well watered, *maṣjûfa*; but no *ṣejfi* rain can relieve the annuals, for the heat of the sun soon burns them. In the same year one tribe may have no *rabî'* at all, while another tribe, even a neighboring one, has abundance of everything. This difference is the more noticeable when the tribes are enemies. Of such a year they say: "This year has queer teeth; men live well (have something to bite into), and men die of hunger; *hâḏi-s-sene w-laha snûn nâs ja'išûn w-nâs jemûtûn.*" The Bedouin also refers to a *rabî' al-mâš*, meaning a season when the entire growth consists of solitary grass patches insufficient to feed even the youngest camels; a *rabî' aṣ-ṣafâra*, when nothing grows except the *ṣafâra* with its yellow blossoms; a *rabî' ad-dimne*, when the grasses, though they may have sprouted and grown luxuriantly after the *wasm* and *šitwi* rains, fail to receive the *smâk* rain and become yellow as early as the end of March; a *rabî an-nafǧân*, when all the plains and lowlands are thickly carpeted with grass; and, finally, a *rabî' aṭ-ṭafḥa*, when not only the lowlands but all the slopes, as well, afford luxuriant pasture.

Just as the Bedouins long for the *rabî'* years, so they fear the years of want, or *ḫawa'*. If for two or three years the rains in the autumn months have not been copious enough there are no grasses and the camels must live on the woody plants alone. The winter rain, *aš-šitwi*, makes these perennials swell, but during the hot *smâk* days they dry up, become unpalatable to the camels, and thus the actual *ajjâm al-ḫawa'*, or days of want, set in, a period in which many camels perish. But if the rains of the *ṣejfi* also fail, then not a single perennial shoots up, last year's offshoots fall to pieces, to be broken and scattered by the wind, and the region soon changes into

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

a dead and death-dealing desert. This[1] is the work of the woman sun, whose sole aim is to burn and destroy.

HOT AND COLD WEATHER; DEWS; WINDS; FOGS; MIRAGES; SAND STORMS

The greatest heats, called *ḥâmm al-ḳlejbên*, occur in the season of *al-ḳêẓ*; *ḥamm aš-shejl*, the season immediately before the rise of Canopus, is the next hottest. When the Pleiades, *aṭ-ṭrajja*, disappear from the heavens, every stalk dries up, *ilja ṛâbat aṭ-ṭrajja kîl ʿûden jibes.*

The season of *aš-šta'*, with a few days before and after it, is the coldest of all; from about December 11 to January 20 is the time of the real winter, *al-marbaʿanijje*. The *šta'* cold is followed by the seven poisonous nights, *saba' semm*; then come the seven bloody nights, *saba' demm*; and finally seven nights in which the fat (of the camels) is either increasing or decreasing, *jisir ad-desem w-lâ jisir*. In explanation it should be said that the nights of the first and second week following the *marbaʿanijje* are often so cold as to make the life of both human beings and animals miserable; the noses of the camels even bleed from the effects of the cold. Not until the third week, or about the middle of February, do the cold nights begin to alternate with warm ones. In the daytime the earth is warm but at night the air stratum more than one meter above the ground cools off; wherefore the two giants (i.e. the camel and the palm) suffer much from cold, *bard aṭ-ṭawilên*. In winter, *al-marbaʿanijje*, all of Palmyrena, all the territories of al-Ḥamâd, al-Wudijân, al-Ḥeǧera, al-Ḥunfa, Ḥesmaʾ, and even the Nefûd are covered with white frost, *ḥalît*. In Palmyrena, al-Ḥamâd, and al-Wudijân trees and bushes become white with hoarfrost, *ǧelîd*, at that time. Snow falls, *feleǧat ad-dinja*, in Palmyrena, al-Ḥamâd, and Ḥesma in large flakes, *ṭwêrât*, regularly every year, but as a rule it remains on the ground no more than one day, excepting in Palmyrena, where it sometimes stays longer, causing great losses to the owners of sheep and goats.

The dew, *ṭall*, *ʿeda'*, or *ṭofal*, is plentiful all the year round, especially during the summer months. It is sent by the moon to refresh both the annuals, or grasses, *ʿêleb*, and the perennials, or woody plants, *ǧaǧar*, which otherwise could not support the sun's heat.

[1] [The drought--Anely st]